

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-8, 10-19 are pending in the application. Claims 2, 10-15 are herein amended. Claim 9 is herein cancelled. Claims 1, 3-4, 7-8 were withdrawn from application. No new matter has been presented.

**Rejection under 35 USC §112, Second Paragraph**

**Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite because mended claim 15 recites that “the holding mechanism is supported by an extension means provided on a conveying media between two circular paths.”**

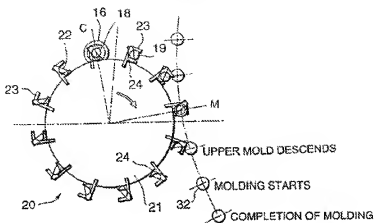
Accordingly, the relevant portion has been amended to “the holding mechanism is supported by a conveyer going around two separate circles.” Thus claim 15 has now become definite.

**Rejections under 35 USC §102(b)**

**Claims 2, 5-6, 10 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Saito et al. (US 2002/0088767 A1).**

Claim 2 has been amended to recite, among other things, “making a following zone where a portion of either the first path or the second path elastically conforms to other of the first path or the second path such that the first path and the second path substantially overlap in a plain view over a distance,” and “wherein the first path of the moving molding die is a circular path, and the holding mechanism to supply the drop into the molding die in a follow-up manner moves along a second path the portion of which elastically varies a radius of rotation.”

FIG. 9



As shown in Fig. 9 of Saito et al., the path of the grip member 23 and the path of the molding die are in merely tangential relation. Neither of the first path and the second path elastically conforms to other of the first path or the second path such that the first path and the second path substantially overlap in a plain view over a distance. Moreover, the holding mechanism does not move along a second path the portion of which elastically varies a radius of rotation.

Saito et al. does not teach or suggest “making a following zone where a portion of either the first path or the second path elastically conforms to other of the first path or the second path such that the first path and the second path substantially overlap in a plain view over a distance,” and “wherein the first path of the moving molding die is a circular path, and the holding mechanism to supply the drop into the molding die in a follow-up manner moves along a second path the portion of which elastically varies a radius of rotation.”

For at least these reasons, claim 2 patentably distinguishes over Saito et al. Claims 5, 6, 10 and 19, depending from claim 2, also patentably distinguish over Saito et al. for at least the same reasons.

**Rejections under 35 USC §103(a)**

Claims 9 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Saito as applied to claim 2 above, and further in view of Winter et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,152,723), henceforth Winter.

Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Saito in view of Winter as applied to claim 11 above, and further in view of Suzuki et al. (U.S. Patent 4,312,437), henceforth Suzuki.

Claim 13/11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Saito in view of Winter as applied to claim 11 above, and further in view of Choinski (US 2002/0093126 A1).

Claim 13/12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Saito in view of Winter and Suzuki as applied to claim 12 above, and further in view of Choinski.

Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Saito as applied to claim 2 above, and further in view of Vogel et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,514,448 B1), henceforth Vogel.

Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Saito in view of Vogel as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Zoppas (U.S. Patent No. 6,422,379 B1).

Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Saito in view of Vogel as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Winter and Choinski.

Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Saito as applied to claim 2 above.

Claim 9 is cancelled herein. Claims 11-16 and 18 directly or indirectly depend from claim 2. The references, Ingram, Winter et al., Suzuki et al., Choinski, Vogel et al., and Zoppas are not cited for disclosing the “following zone” and they do not disclose the “following zone.” These references do not teach or suggest “making a following zone where a portion of either the first path or the second path elastically conforms to other of the first path or the second path such that the first path and the second path substantially overlap in a plain view over a distance,” and “wherein the

first path of the moving molding die is a circular path, and the holding mechanism to supply the drop into the molding die in a follow-up manner moves along a second path the portion of which elastically varies a radius of rotation.”

Thus, these references do not remedy the deficiencies of Saito et al. discussed above.

For at least these reasons, claim 11-16 and 18 patentably distinguish over Saito, Ingram, Winter et al., Suzuki et al., Choinski, Vogel et al., and Zoppas.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,  
**WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP**

/Sadao Kinashi/  
Sadao Kinashi  
Attorney for Applicants  
Registration No. 48,075  
Telephone: (202) 822-1100  
Facsimile: (202) 822-1111

SK/kn